

HUNT TIES COLSON TO BREMER SEARCH

Says White House Adviser
Wanted Him to Do It

By JOHN M. CREWDSON

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WASHINGTON, June 21 — E. Howard Hunt Jr. has told the Senate's Watergate investigating committee that a White House aide ordered him to fly to Milwaukee and search the apartment of Arthur H. Bremer shortly after Bremer had made an attempt on the life of Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama last year, according to a source close to Hunt.

Hunt, who pleaded guilty in the Watergate bugging case, testified under oath in a secret session of the committee last week that he had refused the order from Charles W. Colson, at the time a special counsel to President Nixon, because Bremer's apartment "had been staked out by the F.B.I. and he [Hunt] couldn't do it safely," the source related.

Hunt testified that Mr. Colson's motive in ordering the search of Bremer's apartment was the hope of finding material linking Bremer to "some left-wing or right-wing element, to find out what his motivation was," according to the source, who was present during the Hunt testimony.

Denial by Hunt

Mr. Colson said in a telephone interview that Hunt's sworn assertions were "utterly preposterous." He said that on the night of May 15, 1972, the day Governor Wallace was shot, he had been closeted from 5 P.M. to 9 P.M. in Mr. Nixon's quarters in the old Executive Office Building, next door to the White House, trying to reach L. Patrick Gray 3d, then the acting director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

He returned home at about 9:30 P.M., Mr. Colson said, discovered that Mr. Gray had finally been located, and about an hour later placed a call to Mr. Hunt.

David I. Shapiro, Mr. Colson's law partner who is also representing him in the Watergate matter, said that his client could "establish beyond a doubt" that the call to Hunt was placed between 10:15 P.M. and 10:45 P.M. that evening. He added that Mr. Colson had received by 10 P.M. a "detailed accounting" from the F.B.I. on the literature and other materials taken by agents from Bremer's apartment and from his automobile.

F.B.I. sources confirmed today that Mr. Colson, who was

acting as President Nixon's liaison in the case, had been given such information in a series of half-hourly reports during the evening. Mr. Shapiro said it was "ridiculous" to think that his client would have believed that a trip by Hunt to Milwaukee could have produced any further evidence of Bremer's political associations.

Mr. Colson declared that the Hunt conversation merely consisted of such questions as, "What do you think this guy [Bremer] is up to," and "which side of the spectrum is he from?" It never included a suggestion that Hunt go to Milwaukee and search the Bremer apartment, Mr. Colson said.

Fairness Urged

William O. Bittman, a lawyer representing Hunt in connection with the Watergate case, said that "there was some testimony" by Hunt about the Colson order before the Senate committee, but that the transcript had not yet been corrected by his client.

Mr. Bittman pointed out that his client was "exhausted" at the time of appearance before the Senate committee. Hunt had just returned from testifying before a grand jury in Los Angeles, he said, had had no sleep for "a day and a half," and the same morning had had an altercation with a cellmate at the District of Columbia Jail.

"In fairness to Hunt and to Colson," Mr. Bittman said, "the text [of Hunt's testimony] is subject to correction because of the unusual circumstances of the testimony."

The assassination attempt by the 21-year-old Bremer, for which he was subsequently convicted, took place at a suburban Maryland shopping center on the afternoon of May 15 of last year.

Bremer was immediately taken into custody by the police, and within hours reporters had entered his Milwaukee apartment and found "left wing" political literature, including a Black Panther newspaper. The apartment was later sealed off by F.B.I. agents.

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